



For Immediate Release
October 22, 2008
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

U.S., Iraqi leaders partner on major Iraqi-funded project

By Patricia Ryan
Gulf Region Division



Col. John D. Drolet, commander Gulf Region South (seated lower left); Arabic translator David Daoud; Maj. Gen. Michael Eyre (standing); Iraqi Navy Rear Adm. Mohammed Jawad Khadum; Capt. Paul Abraham, Royal Navy, director; Capt. John Rice, J7 Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq and Brig. Gen. Alaa Jafar, director (seated); discuss details to clarify questions expressed by members of the Iraqi Navy delegation. (USACE photo by Patricia Ryan)

Baghdad, Iraq – Construction is scheduled to begin on new piers and a seawall at Umm Qasr, in the Al Basrah Province of Southern Iraq, at the end of 2008.

Leaders from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Division, the Iraqi Navy, Iraq Ministry of Defense, contractors and support staff met Oct. 16, to dis-

cuss the new conceptual design for the construction of the first Foreign Military Sales project for USACE in Iraq. Foreign Military Sales is a program which allows the host country to pay the U.S. government for construction and supplies related to its military. The meeting served as an opportunity to clear up misunderstandings and develop the partnerships that will see this project to completion.

"I commit to the head of the Iraqi Navy, that if he wishes, he and I, or our representatives, will personally inspect the project monthly, and resolve any issues that might arise," said Brig. Gen. Charles D. Luckey, deputy commanding general, Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, Security Assistance Office. "The ultimate agent to make sure Iraq gets what it pays for on this project at Umm Qasr is the U.S.A."

Representatives for the contractor selected for this project, CCI Inc/PolyEarth Construction, International, provided a thorough briefing on the conceptual design for the piers and seawall at Umm Qasr. Jeffrey R. Mekinda, director of operations for PolyEarth, assured the Iraqi Navy he would personally be on site throughout construction to ensure all aspects of the contract are delivered as promised.

Rear Adm. Mohammed Jawad Khadum, commander of the Iraqi Navy, expressed the need for assurances from USACE representatives that they would be directly involved with quality control, which prompted a long discussion and exchange of ideas.

Col. Jack Drolet, commander Gulf Region South district said, "The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers delivers a quality product. We hold the contractor responsible for delivering the project up to standard, on time and within budget. As construction progresses, we will perform detailed inspection and analysis of materials and closely coordinate with the construction team to ensure we are all moving forward with the same expectations."

"Thanks to the team for the long discussions," said Jawad. "The Iraqi Navy is pleased to have a voice in the process."

The team adjourned on a positive note and agreed to meet again soon to make certain all parties are aware of the process and to ensure construction will proceed on time to meet the scheduled delivery of the new Iraqi Navy ships slated for late 2009.

Note: Patricia Ryan is a public affairs specialist with the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Iraq. For more information, contact the GRD public affairs office 540-665-5339 or email requests to CEGRD.PAO@usace.army.mil. For more information on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq, visit www.grd.usace.army.mil.